To Jim Lesar from Harold Weisberg PA request appeals, JFK appeals 3/21/79

As you are aware, for some years the FBI completely ignored my PA request. After I made an issue of it with the FBI SAs involved in C.A. 75-1996 there was the belated production of some records that from their content alone were entirely incomplete. They depended on other records not provided, for example. However, I was outraged at the deliberate fabrication and malicious distortions as well as the distribution of them at the very least among the highest officials of the land. I specified other files to be searched, to no avail. When I started providing refutations if the FBI ever intended any further compliance it ended.

Last week and today I saw for the first time records of much more serious character, records from which there are no excisions and records without any ifs or buts of the most defamatory nature. The first of these, indicated as sent also to "Crime Research," leaves me no choice but to ask that you ask the FBI to comply fully with my PA request and to call what I provide herewith to the attention of the Attorney General.

Under "BACKGROUND OF WEISBERG" in 62-109060-5900 it is alleged that "Weisberg has been in contact with Soviet officials in this country and has entertained these officials at his farm in Hyattstown, Maryland, where Weisberg raises chickens."

A record I copied to use in an appeal last week will be attached if I can locate it promptly. It alleges a personal relationship between me and Soviet nationals inside the Soviet Embassy. This is unequivocally false.

It also is false that I entertained any Soviet officials at my farm or elsewhere. (This record depends on others not provided.)

There is other content of this record to which I'll return. It provides FBI motive for this totalitarianism and malevolence.

The last sentence of the first paragrpah of 62-109060-6586 reads "Complete background data concerning Weisberg has previously been furnished to the White House and to the Attorney General."

This makes the FBI's viciousness much more serious, much more hurtful, particularly the fabrications about any relationship between me and Soviet nationals inside that Embassies and most of all the fabrication that I entiretained them in my home.

The concluding sentence on page 3 again refers to similar distribution.

Of no defamatory content but of other significance is the false statement in the sense in which used on page 2 of 62-109060-6004, "Lane and Weisberg are in frequent contact with Garrison in New Orleans." As of the date of this record I had been in New Orleans only twice in my life. That is hardly "frequent." The only visit that was a matter of public knowledge was the first, when I testified before the grand jury. The only possible justification for the use of the word "frequent" would be reference to phone conversations,

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Correction: on my second visit I had a press conference.

This was in connection with my ~~third~~ fourth book, Oswald In New Orleans. (I have every reason to believe it was a matter of some interest to the FBI. I have received no FBI records referring to it that I can recall - nothing under PA.)

The arrangements for me were made by one I have since learned was an FBI source.

I have not received any copies of any FBI records that can provide the basis for the quoted sentence, whether or not the sentence is accurate.

Obviously, there are records and they are withheld.

in turn meaning surveillance and of a nature denied by the FBI, if denied evasively.

With regard to the first two records, both of which (as does the third) require there to have been records not provided, I ask that even if this [redacted] all records be provided. If the FBI could retrieve them for such rottenness it can retrieve them under the Acts. I also ask for copies of the tapes, the reels of which ever are xeroxed for such records. If these tapes were transcribed, any such transcripts are within my requests. I want to compare what I really said with what the FBI represents I said - as well as what it omits that I recall clearly enough.

This is vintage FBI - libel as a substitute for facing fact.

On the Pyne show I produced and the camera picked up FBI records.

Rather than my writing being inaccurate, the FBI boilerplate (never once in any record I've seen being accompanied with what I actually said), with typical FBI semantics my accuracy with regard to Lovelady is confirmed at the end of the first full paragraph on page 2 of the first record. I showed an FBI photograph which was represented by the FBI as showing the shirt Lovelady said he was wearing when JFK was assassinated. He had said no such thing and the shirt very obviously can't be the one in the Altgens photograph referred to, which I also showed. So on the Pyne show I presented the contradictory photographs and the exact language of the FBI's false report. I used a facsimile on the show, not my words.

"Lovelady has since clarified.... " "Clarified indeed!" (But no such records has come to my attention. None is attached to this record. This also is typical of the FBI. First I proved its report was false and on one of the important questions faced by the Warren Commission and them more than a half year before the date of this report I published an accurate description of the shirt he was actually wearing. (Can one guess the need for "Lovelady" to "clarify" for the FBI?)

Of course the FBI has much to hide with regard to what follows. I report from memory but am prepared to produce the FBI's own record.

It is alleged that I erred in a truthful account of a phone call to me by one who represented himself as a Marine Corps colleague of Oswald. In this call I was told that Oswald had both Top Secret and Crypto clearance. The FBI says this is "absolurely false."

(See if you can get any of those stalwarts to put some money where the foul mouth is.)

Prior to this report I published proof in confirmation of the phone call, proof that was under oath if not in FBI reports of interviews with the witness who had to know: the commissioned officer under whom Oswald performed special duties with radar.

That testimony was that Oswald had to have had at least secret clearance.

Now it happens that I have recently read the FBI's report on its search of Oswald's Marine service record, a record I can provide.

In the attached record and at this point the FBI says of Oswald, "He did, of course, hold a (sic) clearance for certain classified data which was published in Marine training documents and the like."

Again, typical FBI semantics. Only for reading training manuals? Not for operating what then was some of our most secret equipment?

But the FBI does say that Oswald had a clearance of a grade it could have reported and didn't. Not reporting it prevented overt lying. Distortion is more congenial to the kinds of people who create these kinds of records.

Now that there is an FBI admission that Oswald had this unspecified clearance, "of course," I'm telling you that when the FBI examined and reported on Oswald's Marine records it made no reference to his having had any clearance of any kind. I can provide a cop

In all of this there is but one thing that suits the FBI's characterization of me and what I said as "absolutely false." It is the FBI's words, "absolutely false." Thanks to typical FBI lawlessness in violating the Acts I can't have knowledge of what REL had when he wrote fn W.A.Branigan what was directed to W.C.Sullivan.

I also can't know, for the same reasons, what the FBI had that it withheld.

But I have obtained what the FBI did not provide to the Warren Commission, and I am quite prepared, with copies of official documents, to stand on my "Top Secret" representations.

I'd like to know if when it investigated the most subversive of crimes, the assassination of a President, the FBI is prepared to stand on its record of not obtained and providing this information to the higher FBI and Departmental officials and the Presidential Commission.

I believe this entire KGB/Nazi business stinks of FBI motive for what I am beginning to see it was doing to me in dirty secrecy.

How was all this used, aside from influencing the President and the Attorney General?

Last week for the first time I saw 105-82555-5646 and related records I have copied and about which I will write you separately in connection with that FOIA request.

This appears to have been written by T.N.Goble. If my recollection is correct he is in the Soviet Section. Of course I wonder by what convolutions my FOIA request got there.

Following recitation of some of the vile allegations he concludes Serial 5647 in these words, which became FBI and Department policy: "In view of Weisberg's character, he should not (emphasis in original) be given the information he requests, and there is legal ground for our position (my emphasis.)"

You have a list of my ignored FOIA requests. And you know the Act, then and now.

I was refused the information, as you will see.

Typical FBI misrepresentation of my request made this easier. My request is included in the records attached to or in Serial 5646 and the existence of relevant records also is disclosed.

I will be writing you further. I regard this as most serious, thus ask that it receive higher-level attention, and want to be able to get it to you tomorrow, when I will be in Washington.

If I have time I will amplify with regard to the allegation that I entertained Soviet officials at my farm. If I lack the time now I'll write you further.

For now I tell you two things: travel as far as my farm was prohibited to all Soviet officials in those days.

If there is any basis for this "absolutely false" FBI defamation it most likely comes from a corruption of what to the best of my knowledge was a matter of telephone communication only.

When we farmed my wife and I won just about every honor there was in poultry. She was the national chicken cooking champion. I was the national barbecue champion and won other cooking honors. We won first prize (and other prizes) for raising chickens in a national dressed poultry competition. And I did have the best. I was a consultant to several suppliers of materials used in poultry husbandry, including drug houses. I was used as a consultant by several governments and univeristies.

You may recall the "kitchen" encounter between Nixon and Khruschev and their talk about peaceful competition. About then Khruschev was Eisenhower's guest. A bit of one-upmanship occurred to me - to challenge the entire Soviet agriculture to "peaceful competition" in chicken raising, even cooking - me against all of them.

As I thought of this I thought of several people with whom I would consult. One was a former reporter, later in Navy intelligence, and then with an advertising and public relations agency in which he was a partner. The other had been CBS White House reporter, Bill Costello. (The first is dead. I don't know if Costello is.)

Costello was a customer. He had office space with Tommy Corcoran, fairly well known for his CIA connections.

Costello read the draft of the letter and had an idea - for me to go with it to the USIA. He phoned and made an appointment, for right then, with the head of the European or Soviet desk, a man whose name I recall as Walters. I think he had a German accent. Walters loved the idea and made a suggestion, that I include an invitation to the Khruschevs to visit out farm when they were here. They would pass it going to and from Camp David and the Eisenhower farm anyway. So I added that paragraph, mailed the letter, with a copy to USIA. I believe USIA used it.

I am not now clear on whether I then heard from the State Department but I know I did several times about then. I did get a call from someone in the Soviet Embassy. The gist was that Khruschve would not be able to accept the invitation but maybe while he and Ike were busy Mrs. Khruschev would. Then I know I heard from State later, to tell me that it was not certain but if an afternoon scheduled for Mrs. K in Virginia was over in time she and others would come. Later I was told they lacked the time.

Later I heard again from State. As I recall the name it was Hillis Lorrie (phon). Would I go to the USSR and teach them how to raise better chickens as part of the then ongoing exchanges? I'd have to have a sponsor pay transportation but all other costs would be met. The Northeastern Poultry Producers' Council thought it was a great idea and agreed to pay the transeportation costs.

I was also given to understand that any way in which I could be helpful would be what this government desired, our government. I have some recollection of beginning to arrange for a tour of a typical American feed mill but nothing came of it.

Nor did the trip to teach poultry husbandry ever come off.

I suppose that of which I now write provides an explanation.

But my wife and I are certain that no Soviets of any kind were ever at our farm.

I was part of other official programs, like Peace Corps, and I made gifts under it to several underdevoloped lands, which the State Department used effectively in later propaganda in African. (Do I have to tell you how "red" the Peace Corps was? Do you recall the Soviet campaign against it?)

One non-Soviet ambassador visited us several times. State distributed photos of State higher-ups, my wife and me and this ambassador, from Ghana. One set was taken by a State photographer at our farm. Another in the 16th Street Embassy, by happenstance on my birthday that year. (State never gave me copies, even under my PA request.) We were guests at the Embassy and met people like the Secretary's wife, Mrs. Rusk, there. We were also guests when the ambassador was shifted to Italy and he was given a party prior to depature, not at the Embassy.

There were other diplomatic people from other countries, of varying ranks.

But no Soviet or Soviet bloc person we can recall.

I was a Washington correspondent before I went into the Army. The USSR was our ally then. As I had to go to other embassies I went there on work. Always unsuccessfully and never with any personal relationship. In fact they stole every story idea on which I went there for help. One appeared in LIFE, another was on the UPI wire - these I recall. I think there were other such thefts. Professionally this is what they were.

My arguments were to no avail.

Once one of the press people suggested that we continue our discussion over lunch. It was Dutch treat, nearby, and led to nothing at all. In fact when the editor (Republican, head of a GOP committee) of the magazine (Nixon's friend Walter Annenberg's) asked me to get non-secret information to illuminate a by-line article by a then famous correspondent, Walter Duranty, and the Soviets refused even that, I got the identical information from our Commerce Department.

Some personal associations with Soviet nationals in the Embassy!

Of course it was then well known that the FBI photographed all who entered and left that 16th Street edifice. Naturally nothing like this surfaced under my PA request. Nor was anything indicated with any claim to exemption.

I was well enough known in the Department as a correspondent. I took much information to it related to interferences with the war effort and national defense, real not imaginary. In some cases prosecutions followed my exposes. I was on the Department's press list. I got its and the FBI's releases. In fact the Department suggested that I work for British intelligence and I did - economic warfare. How "red" was that in the days of the Nazi-

Soviet pact?

What I'm waiting for the FBI to choke on when it can't avoid finding it is the letter of praise for some of my work by the Founding Director. I believe it was published by Mr. Annenberg, if the FBI persists in pretending it can't find it or that it doesn't exist.

Can you think of an appropriate exemption under either Act?

Harold